

CLAIMS

1. A method of improving moisture retention ability of skin and/or treating or protecting skin for another purpose, comprising applying to skin a composition comprising a compound selected from the group consisting of ethanolamine, 2-methoxyethylamine, O-phosphorylethanamine, 2-ethylaminoethanol, diethanolamine, 2-dimethylaminoethanol, choline, 2-amino-2-hydroxymethyl-1,3-propanediol, noradrenalin, phenethylamine, ethylenediamine, taurine, phosphatidylethanamine, N-(2-hydroxyethyl)acetoamide, 2-(methylamino)ethanol, 2-anilinoethanol, 2-(benzylamino)ethanol, 3-amino-1-propanol, 2-amino-1-butanol, putrescine, DL-pyroglutamic acid and triethanolamine.

2. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises L-arginine.

3. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the compound and/or L-arginine originate in a rice preparation.

4. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the compound originates in a rice preparation.

5. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises a rice preparation in admixture with the compound.

6. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the composition further comprises L-arginine and/or a rice preparation in admixture with the compound.

7. The method according to any one of Claims 3-6, wherein the rice preparation is produced by hydrating rice or crushed rice, adding amylase or protease and allowing to react, and adding yeast following completion of the reaction to perform saccharification and fermentation.

8. The method according to any one of Claims 3-6, wherein the rice preparation is produced by hydrating rice or crushed rice, adding one, two or all of amylase, protease and lipase, heating, and extracting by heating or repeating these reactions at least once.

9. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the compound originates in an animal, plant or microbial preparation.

10. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the compound and/or L-arginine originate in an animal, plant or microbial preparation.

11. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises an animal, plant or microbial preparation in admixture with the compound.

12. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the composition further comprises L-arginine and/or an animal, plant or microbial preparation in admixture with the compound.

13. The method according to any one of Claims 9-12, wherein the animal, plant or microbial preparation is produced by fermenting an animal, plant or microbial substance, or adding a fermenting sugar, followed by fermentation.

14. The method according to any one of Claims 9-12, wherein the animal, plant or microbial preparation is produced by adding water, as necessary, to the animal, plant or microbial material, adding one, two or all of amylase, protease and lipase, heating, and extracting by heating or further repeating these reactions at least once.

15. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skin to which the composition is applied requires prevention, prevention of exacerbation or treatment of atopic dermatitis.

16. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skin to which the composition is applied requires moisturization.

17. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skin to which the composition is applied requires restoration of the barrier mechanism and function thereof.

18. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skin to which the composition is applied requires conditioning of corneal layer thereof.

19. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skin to which the composition is applied requires conditioning of epidermal keratocytes thereof.

20. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skin to which the composition is applied requires conditioning epidermis thereof.

21. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the compound is applied to the skin in the form of a combination of the compound and a moisture retention agent.

22. The method according to Claim 21, wherein the moisture retention agent comprises one or more substances selected from the group consisting of polyvalent alcohols selected from the group consisting of glycerin, dipropylene glycol and 1,3-butyleneglycol; sugars selected from the group consisting of sorbitol, maltitol, dextrin, hyaluronic acid and chitosan; mucopolysaccharides and sugar derivatives; alcohols selected from the group consisting of glycerin, dipropylene glycol and 1,3-butyleneglycol; sugars selected from the group consisting of sorbitol, maltitol, dextrin, hyaluronic acid and chitosan; mucopolysaccharides and sugar derivatives; polypeptides selected from the group consisting of elastin and collagen; organic acids and their salts selected from the group consisting of pyrrolidone carboxylic acid, citric acid, lactic acid and salts thereof; biopharmaceutical and natural moisture retention agents selected from the group consisting of refined rice wine, rice bran, aloe, licorice and chamomile; bio-component moisture retention agents selected from the group consisting of vitamins, placental

extract, urea, lecithins, phospholipids, ceramides, cholesterols and sphingolipids; and vegetable extracts, fruit extracts, kelp extracts, enzymes and inorganic salts; and further comprises one or more substances selected from the group consisting of animal oils, vegetable oils, hydrocarbons, higher alcohols and esters.

23. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the composition further comprises a drug and/or base that can be used in externally applied skin preparations as pharmaceuticals, quasi-drugs and cosmetics.

24. The method according to Claim 23, wherein the drug comprises one or more kinds of substances selected from the group consisting of bactericidal drugs, wound protective agents, wound healing agents, drugs for suppurative diseases, analgesic, anti-itching, astringent and antiphlogistic agents, immunosuppresants, drugs for parasitic skin diseases, skin softeners, hair agents, vitamin agents and biopharmaceuticals, and the base comprises one or more kinds of substances selected from the group consisting of moisture retention agents, astringents, refrigerants, antioxidants, ultraviolet absorbers, infrared dispersants, preservatives, antibiotics, chelating agents, surfactants, foaming agents, stabilizers, penetrants, assistants, pH

adjusters, buffers, emulsifiers, opacifiers, fragrances and pigments.

25. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the skin to which the composition is applied requires prevention or treatment of skin disease selected from the group consisting of atopic dermatitis, dry skin symptoms, pruritis, frostbite, cracking, chapped skin, skin aging symptoms, skin damage caused by ultraviolet rays, darkening, blackening, skin disorders arising in the epidermis, physicochemical skin disorders, skin symptoms caused by the use of water, soap, detergents, surfactants or solvents, adverse side effects of externally applied skin preparations, biological skin disorders, dermatitis and eczema.

26. The method according to Claim 25, wherein dry skin symptoms are symptoms selected from atopic skin, dry or rough skin, aged skin, ichthyosis, dry skin, chapped skin, asterosis, xeroderma, dry eczema, facial dry eczema and progressive volar keratoderma, and/or selected from erythema, sclerosis and cornification, cracking, scaling, wrinkles, itching and dry marks, while skin aging symptoms are selected from wrinkles and decreased skin tightness and elasticity, skin damage caused by ultraviolet rays is selected from spots and freckles,

skin disorders arising from the epidermis are selected from turnover abnormalities, fineness and moistness, physicochemical skin disorders are selected from cuts, burns and floor burns, biological skin disorders are selected from athlete's foot and skin infections, and inflammatory cornification disorders are selected from the group consisting to dermatitis and eczema.

27. The method according to Claim 25, wherein the skin disease is skin aging symptoms.

28. The method according to Claim 25, wherein the skin disease is selected from the group consisting of darkening, wrinkles and decreased skin tightness and elasticity, and spots.

29. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the composition comprises cosmetic, quasi-drug or pharmaceutical.